


# SCHOOL ELECTIONS CALENDAR 2014

Days From Election	Deadlines	Event (Special Instances Identified in Green)	MCA Citation
No earlier than 135 days, or later than 40 days before	<b>Sunday, December 22 through Thursday, March 27</b>	<b>Trustee candidates file for election.</b> Nomination petition and Oath of Candidacy must be filed with election administrator. No person signing a petition may sign more nomination petitions than there are trustee positions open. <b>NO CANDIDATE MAY APPEAR ON THE BALLOT UNLESS HE OR SHE MEETS THIS DEADLINE.</b>  <i>Candidate must be registered to vote at the time the petition is filed.</i>	<a href="#">13-10-201(6)</a>  <a href="#">20-3-305</a>  <a href="#">20-3-344</a>
Within 5 days of becoming a candidate	<b>Friday, December 27 through Tuesday, April 1</b>	<b>Contact the Montana Commissioner of Political Practices (MCP)</b> office at (406) 444-2942 if you are in (1) a first-class district located in a county with populations of 15,000 or more, OR (2) a county high school district with an enrollment of 2,000 or more. The filing of C-1-A is required within 5 days of becoming a candidate.	<a href="#">13-37-206</a>  <a href="#">13-37-201</a>
At least 70 days before	<b>Tuesday, February 25</b>	<b>Request for a mail ballot election</b> must be sent from trustees to the election administrator. Exception: Even if no request is received, the election administrator could decide to request a mail ballot election.	<a href="#">13-19-202</a>  <a href="#">13-19-203</a>
At least 60 days before	<b>Friday, March 7</b>	<b>Election administrator sends mail ballot election plan/timetable/sample instructions</b> to the Secretary of State's Office so that it is received by this deadline (i.e. fax, mail, or e-mail to SOS office (not post marked)).	<a href="#">13-19-205</a>
At least 40 days before	<b>Thursday, March 27</b>	<b>Trustees call for an election.</b> The trustees must pass a resolution stating: 1) the date of the election; 2) the purpose of the election; 3) the polling site(s) (if changed from previous school election); and 4) the time the polls will open, if before noon. The trustees do NOT have to set levy amounts at this time; however, they must be set in time for the clerk to certify the ballot (not less than 25 days before the election). The resolution must be delivered to the county election administrator at least 35 days before the election, but it need NOT be posted. The trustees must also appoint three election judges per precinct. The resolution should appear in the board minutes. An election may also be called by the county superintendent, county commissioners, board of public education or the trustees of a community college.  <b>Bond Elections are subject to additional requirements (see <a href="#">20-9-422</a>, MCA).</b>	<a href="#">20-20-201</a>  <a href="#">20-20-203</a>  <a href="#">20-9-422</a>
At least 38 days before	<b>Friday, March 28</b>	<b>Last day trustee candidates can withdraw from the election.</b> Any candidate that has already filed for election, but wishes to withdraw their name, may do so by sending a statement of withdrawal to the election administrator.	<a href="#">20-3-305</a>
At least 35 days before	<b>Tuesday, April 1</b>	<b>Last day to file resolutions for school election with county election administrator.</b>	<a href="#">20-20-201(2)</a>
No later than the 30th day before	<b>Friday, April 4</b>	<b>Deadline to notify election judges of appointment.</b>	<a href="#">13-4-102</a>
30 days before	<b>Monday, April 7</b>	<b>Voter registration closes.</b> A voter must register by this deadline to vote in the school election. County election administrator prepares registration list. It is not necessary to publish any notice of closing of voter registration.	<a href="#">20-20-311</a>  <a href="#">20-20-312</a>
30 days before	<b>Monday, April 7</b>	<b>Absentee ballots must be available for bond elections.</b> If the bond election is to be held on a date other than the regular school Election Day in May, ballots must be available 30 days before.	<a href="#">20-9-426</a>

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Not more than 30 days before	<b>Monday, April 7</b>	<b>Contact your county election administrator</b> for the biennial absentee ballot list. The county election administrator is required to mail an address confirmation form to voters who previously requested an absentee ballot for all elections. The county election administrator sends the confirmation form in January of every even-numbered year (in mail ballot elections, ballots are sent under mail ballot procedures rather than under absentee ballot list procedures).	<a href="#">13-13-212</a>
Not less than 20 days, or more than 30 days before	<b>Sunday April 6 through Wednesday, April 16</b>	<b>Notice of election is posted.</b> The election notice must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the district AND posted in at least three public places in the district, provided that in incorporated cities and towns at least one notice must be posted in each ward or precinct. Radio or television notice may be used to supplement the notice. The notice must include: 1) the date and polling places of the election; 2) polling place hours; 3) each proposition to be considered by the electorate; 4) the number of trustee positions, if any, subject to election and the length of the terms for those positions; and 5) where and how absentee ballots may be obtained.  If the polling place has changed from the previous school election, that change must be referred to in the notice. If more than one proposition will be considered in the same district, each proposition must be set apart and identified, or placed in separate notices.	<a href="#">20-20-204</a>
No later than 26 days before	<b>Thursday, April 10 (By 5 p.m.)</b>	<b>Deadline for write-in candidate for a trustee position on a school board to file Declaration of Intent</b>	<a href="#">13-10-211(3)</a>
Not less than 25 days before	<b>Friday, April 11</b>	<b>Election by Acclamation and Cancellation of Election - Notice.</b> If the number of candidates filing a nomination petition or filing a declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate is equal to or less than the number of open trustee positions to be elected, the trustees cancel the trustee election. They must then give notice that a trustee election will not be held.  <i>**A trustee election held in single-member or trustee nominating district is considered a separate trustee election for declaring the election by acclamation.</i>	<a href="#">20-3-313</a>
Not less than 25 days before	<b>Friday, April 11</b>	<b>Election administrator certifies ballot.</b> The election administrator prepares the final ballot form, listing all candidates and propositions to be voted upon. The ballot must then be delivered to the election administrator, if other than the clerk. <i>Trustees must pass a resolution stating exact levy amounts by this date in order for the clerk to certify the ballot.</i> This resolution must include the durational limit, if any, on the levy.	<a href="#">20-20-401</a> <a href="#">15-10-425</a>
Not before the 25 <sup>th</sup> day nor later than the 15 <sup>th</sup> day	<b>Friday, April 11 through Monday, April 21</b>	<b>Mail ballots mailed.</b> If mail ballot election is used, all ballots must be mailed on the same day, except that if an inactive elector reactivates after the ballots are mailed, the elector should be provided with or mailed a ballot. If the elector reactivates after noon on the day before election day, the elector must come in on election day to receive a ballot.	<a href="#">13-19-207</a>
At least 20 days before	<b>Wednesday, April 16</b>	<b>Absentee ballots available.</b> The election administrator prepares ballots for absentee voters. Remember to enclose four things in the absentee package. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ballot (with stubs removed)</li> <li>• Instructions for voting and returning the ballot</li> <li>• A secrecy envelope, free of any marks that would identify the voter</li> <li>• A self-addressed, return envelope with affirmation printed on the back of the envelope</li> </ul>	<a href="#">13-13-214</a> <a href="#">20-20-401</a>

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Day before	<b>Monday, May 5 (By Noon)</b>	<b>Deadline for absentee ballot requests.</b> Voters who wish to vote absentee may request an absentee ballot in writing or in person until noon the day before the election. <i>**Remember to include a section on the absentee ballot application allowing the voter to become part of the biennial absentee list.</i>	<a href="#">13-13-211</a> <a href="#">13-13-214</a>
Day before	<b>Monday, May 5</b>	<b>Deliver certified copy of the lists of registered electors</b> for each polling place to the district by election administrator before the election day. District then delivers list(s) to election judges prior to opening of polls.	<a href="#">20-20-313</a>
Election Day 	<b>Tuesday, May 6</b>	<b>ELECTION DAY.</b> The election administrator must prepare the polling places, printed ballots, ensure election judges are present, and conduct a fair and unbiased election (See Election Procedures).  <b>Notify election judges of the names of write-in candidates</b>	<a href="#">Title 13</a> <a href="#">20-20-105</a> <a href="#">20-20-401</a> <a href="#">20-20-411</a>
Following receipt of the tally sheets from all polls and within 15 days after election	<b>Wednesday, May 21</b>	<b>Trustees canvass the votes, issue certificates of election, and publish results.</b> Trustees review the tally sheets compiled by the election judges to ascertain their accuracy. Recounts are ordered, if necessary. If tally is complete and accurate, trustees issue certificates of election to successful candidates. The canvassed results shall be published immediately in a newspaper that will give notice to the largest number of people in the district.	<a href="#">20-20-415</a> <a href="#">20-20-416</a>
Within 5 days after the official canvas	<b>Monday, May 12 through Monday, May 27</b>	<b>Deadline for filing a petition for recount.</b> When a question submitted to a vote of the people is decided by a margin not exceeding ¼ of 1% of the total votes cast for and against the question, a petition for recount must be filed within 5 days after the official canvas.	<a href="#">13-16-201</a>
Within 15 days after receipt of certificate of election	<b>Wednesday, May 21</b>	<b>Candidate completes and files Oath of Office</b> with the County Superintendent.  <i>**Newly elected trustees may not be seated until the oath is filed. The issuance and the oath may be administered at the organizational meeting (below), but must be completed within 15 days of issuance.</i>	<a href="#">20-3-307</a> <a href="#">20-1-202</a> <a href="#">1-6-101</a>
Within 15 days of election	<b>Wednesday, May 21</b>	<b>Deadline for trustees to hold organizational meeting</b> to elect chair and appoint clerk.	<a href="#">20-3-321</a>
12 days before and 20 days after	<b>Thursday, April 24 through Monday, May 26</b>	<b>Filing Report:</b> Candidates who marked Box "C" on their form C-1-A must file form C-5 with the district clerk and Montana Commissioned of Political Practices.	<a href="#">13-37-226(4)</a>
June 1	<b>Friday, May 30</b>	<b>Deadline for trustees to request county election administrator to conduct school elections for next year.</b> The school district clerk/election administrator is designated the election administrator for school elections. However, the trustees of any district may request the county election administrator (EA) to become the election administrator for school elections. If the county EA accepts, then he/she must perform all the duties the school clerk would have. The school district must assume all costs of the election.	<a href="#">20-20-417</a>

**Special instances are identified with green lettering**

1-1-307, MCA. Postponement of day appointed for an action when it falls on a holiday or Saturday. Whenever any act of a secular nature, other than a work of necessity or mercy, is appointed by law or contract to be performed upon a particular day, which day falls upon a holiday or a Saturday, such act may be performed upon the next business day with the same effect as if it had been performed upon the day appointed.

*If the deadline, as read in statute, is phrased "not later than..." the deadline does not move to a later date but an earlier one.*

**Additional References:**

Sample forms can be found at this address:

[http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1\\_7](http://www.opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1_7)

Election Manual: [http://opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1\\_7](http://opi.mt.gov/Finance&Grants/schoolfinance/Index.html#p7GPc1_7)

MT Secretary of State's Office: <http://sos.mt.gov/Elections/index.asp>